

By Sidney Smith

The Missing Will

"He had previously removed a pane of glass—they are not large. Say he reached through, looked inside—the French window, I— and then had put in the pane, filled it, and gone away."

"I cried the boy. "That could be true."

"Of course, it could. And there are ways it might have been accomplished. Now, we don't say that did in, but what I want to know is in at the head of this investigation."

"I can't feel that Mrs. Bates is," Peyton said, a little sullenly. "She not married yet, and, therefore, absent housekeeper. I feel rather shyly myself."

"But you say you are the Mrs. Bates," the detective inquired.

"Perhaps I ought not to have told," Emily Bates spoke regretfully.

Dr. Waring's lawyer will tell it is true I am the principal heir, so designated in his will, which will find in a secret drawer in his study."

"Do you know where this drawer is?"

"After all I will ask you to show us, are the heirs, there is no further on your account. Now, the day after your father left the room, after four hours later, I was at the prosecuting attorney, stood in the study."

"The day after the master had been re-burying of Mrs. Bates' regret he had not before the embalmer's work had led the red ring on the forehead."

"Was a sign," he said to Morton, was moodily listening. "A sign like left by the murderer, always means."

"You agree to murder, then?" Morton eagerly glided to have his corroborated.

"I don't know, here, Morton; it's to be either murder or suicide. Is it? Yes? Well, then, to which two do the greater number of point? Sum up, for, or suicide we can't look at the room argument."

"I don't know how any one get in or out of this study, but say, that's the only sign of suicide, for murder we have the absence of the lock, and the sign of the dead man's forehead. Wish that it wasn't burnt on, for appeared after the embalmers took it."

"No, it wasn't as deep as a More like an impression left by of cold metal or the edge of a tumbler."

"Of course, and decidedly an important clue. For, here's the queer. The doctors declare the mark have been made while the man was young, low can that be explained?"

"I've it out. It's too much for me, was too small a circle to have made by the tumbler on the water."

"I measured it."

"Of course. Why I think it was of revenge. Suppose the motive was the reason for revenge something to do with a quarrel in a small glass or cup figured, or enough, of course, it is a small glass or cup as all something with a ring-like edge, there was a reason for the sign on the sign's face."

"I see, though I never could have it out like that."

"I don't say it's exactly what and, but there must have been of the sort, for what other sign has a person, the robbery of the sign, for what other? I imagine Dr. Waring branding on forehead, and then killing him?"

"I don't know, yet."

"If he had, what's the matter as a murder case, and the criminal first, and then he had entered the locked room?"

"Well, those locked rooms—when they're way off, Morton, when you're locked room."

"There is no secret passage at all. I'm sure. Your ingenious idea of spring and replacing a whole pane is not a clever, I grant, but we've got a pane has been lately used. They're all framed and hard and even painted putty."

"I know it. But some other such thing of it, we've devised."

"I don't think of it. We've examined all the window sashes and doors, as well as far as I can see the matter is absolutely unenterable. But, but, but, I'm going to work on the basis. Because inexplicable seems, there are even no insurmountable difficulties in the way of the theory. Now, I suppose had the print expert in?"

"I haven't met yet."

"Well, What kind of a de- are you? Well, get him, and to work. What about foot- outside the room?"

"Outside, either. But inside, I have been trampled by a score of footprints."

"I can't get footprints on a thick, discolored matting crumpled, sometimes you can. And a polished will often show marks. What are you doing, anyway?"

"I've started to see, Mr. Cray. I've every minute since I began for a few hours' sleep."

"You've been here for four hours since the was given?"

"Yes, you put in at twice, then. Where have you left?"

"I've found out, to my own satisfaction—if it is a murder— that Lockwood was all about it."

"I suspect him."

"One of the deed, or of guilty of his murder."

"The key handle, and a string from the bar, leading down and under the door. Outside the murderer pulled the string, the string was fast to the lock, the bar fell to the floor and he dragged it under the door by means of the string."

"Ingenious! but it implies a door raised from the ground of wood."

"I know. And this one isn't. But it all goes to prove that there can be some way—some diabolically clever way—some trick. And the Japanese are diabolically clever in the use of wood, and if the two worked together they could accomplish wonders. Then Lockwood, with his wooden face, could have done it. The Japanese, let us say, couldn't, but Lockwood was paid off."

"Interesting—but all theory."

"To be proved or disproved, then."

"Yes, but meantime, you are losing time on more practical investigation. Let's look outside for footprints. Means for any one coming or going from this side entrance."

"The French window? Nobody could go that way in this weather; the path is too smooth. That's used mostly in summer time."

"Nevertheless," Cray opened the door, "somebody has been here."

"Criminologists beamed and stared hard. How had he come to neglect a matter of such importance. There were two plainly visible lines of footprints in the snow, one quite obviously coming toward the house and one going away from it."

"There's your murderer," said Cray, quietly.

"No," but Morton wriggled anxiously. "It couldn't be. No murderer is going to walk through crusty snow, and from the scene of his crime, leaving definite footprints like those!"

"That's no argument. He might have been out of the current of crime, and afterward, might have been so made himself he couldn't plan safely."

"Oh, well, get what you can from them," said Morton, pettishly. "I suppose you deduce a tall man, with light hair and two teeth missing."

"Don't be cheap, Morton. And, on the contrary, I deduce a small man. They are small footprints, and close together. The Japanese are small men, Morton."

"Well, these prints are more than twenty-four hours old, and they're not clear enough to incriminate anybody."

"They haven't changed an iota from the moment they were made. This snap has kept everything frozen solid. Look at the frost still on the panes, the icicles still on the window sashes, the snow coating still on all the trees and branches and two teeth missing—evidence since night before last, and until it begins to thaw we have these footprints as intact evidence. I will have them photographed."

"The snowball," Morton agreed after further examination. "And you say, too close together for an ordinary sized man. It looks like the Jap."

"Beginning to wake up, are you? Yes, you're been asleep at the switch, Morton."

"Nothing of the sort, Mr. Cray. But I ought to have help. I've had all I could tackle, making the necessary first inquiries, and getting the facts straightened out."

"That business could have waited better than these other things. Now, let's get the criminologist the lawyer arriving. Let's keep that Jap out of the study. Interfere that clear."

"They met Crimmins in the hall, and took him to the living room."

"The criminologist, of course, was immediately taken up, and Mrs. Bates was asked to tell which desk drawer it was in."

"Accompanied by the lawyer and the secretary, Mrs. Bates indicated the drawer, and Lockwood opened it with his key."

"There were a few papers in it but no will."

"Nor could further search disclose any such document."

"You took it out," said Mrs. Bates blankly.

"No one could answer her. The others came thronging in, Cray's urgent requests to keep out of the study being the loudest reason for his presence. Interfere that clear."

"I knew it," declared Mrs. Peyton triumphantly. "Now, I guess you won't be so cocky, Emily Bates—your or your authority?"

"Mrs. Bates looked at her. "I am the best authority on this matter, I assure you, but I cannot prove it until the will is found. It isn't in your possession, Mr. Crimmins!"

"No," Dr. Waring preferred to keep it himself. I cannot understand its disappearance."

"A lot of paper has been burned in this fireplace," said Helen Peyton, who was poking the ashes around."

Morton hastened to look, for it seemed to him as if everybody was stealing his thunder."

"Nothing that can be identified," he said, carelessly.

"No!" murmured Cray. "At any rate, it looks as if some legal papers were destroyed. This bit of ash is quite evidently the remainder of several sheets folded together."

But no definite knowledge could be gained outside the fact that much paper had been burned there. As no fire had been made since the discovery of the truth, it stood as a reason the papers were burned by Dr. Waring himself or by his midnight intruder, if there were such a one.

"Well," Cray demanded of the lawyer, "will you be so kind to find who inherits the property of Dr. Waring? And it is considerable?"

"Yes," Dr. Waring had quite a fortune, Crimmins told them. "As to an heir, he has a distant cousin—a sagacious man, I judge—who is the legal heir, but I know he made a will in Mrs. Bates' favor, and it included a few minor legacies to the members of this family, some of them."

"I know it," Mrs. Bates said. "I'm perfectly familiar with all the bequests. But where is the will? It must be found! It can't have been burnt!"

CONTINUED TOMORROW

THE GUMPS—Peel Off Another Five Grand

MR. GUMP, I HAVE BEEN IN POLITICS ALL MY LIFE AND FROM INDICATIONS, IF I AM A JUDGE AND I THINK I AM, YOU'RE ELECTED NOW- THOSE TWO YAPS RUNNING AGAINST YOU ARE LIKE TWO DACHSHUNDS AGAINST A GREYHOUND -

WITTE

BUT WE MUST NOT GET TOO CONFIDENT - WE'VE GOT TO FIGHT EVERY INCH OF THE WAY - WE'VE GOT TO HAVE SPEAKERS - SPELL-BINDERS - I KNOW A COUPLE OF SILVER TONGUED ORATORS WHO CAN TALK A CANARY BIRD OUT OF A TREE - ARE THEY CONVINCING? THEY COULD ELECT A GERMAN PRESIDENT OF FRANCE - BUT IT TAKES MONEY - AT LEAST \$5,000.00 TO START WITH.

THAT'S SATISFACTORY-
YOU'LL FIND IM NO QUITTER- I'M IN
THIS FIGHT TO STAY AND WHEN
THE SMOKE OF BATTLE HAS
CLEARED AWAY IF IM NOT
ELECTED THEY'LL ALWAYS
REMEMBER THE FIGHTING
ANDREW GUMP.

SIDNEY
SMITH

SOMEBODY'S STENOGR—"Venus" Is Right

THIS IS THE RECIPIENT OF MANY EXTRA FAVORS AND VERSES OF PASSION. CLEOPATRY HAD NOTHING ON HER FOR LUXURY.



WHILE CAM AND MARY, CAPTURED WITH "VENUS" ON THEIR CAMPING TRIP, LANGUISH IN A COLD CAVE, "VENUS" HAS A SPECIAL ONE ALL HER OWN!



A-B-N. 20
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The Young Lady Across the Way

PATHETIC FIGURES

[illegible]

FONTAINE FOX

A cartoon illustration showing a group of people running away from a large, stylized sun. One person is shouting "WHY THE HELL?". The scene is chaotic, with people running in various directions, some carrying bags. The sun is a simple circle with radiating lines. The overall tone is one of panic or confusion.

SCHOOL DAYS

Bill starts to school

Gets umbrella

Rain stops

She hooes for umbrella

Thought

Hoo hooes for Muriel

Muriel vants under tree

Starts raining all agam

Sees Permal escorting Muriel into schoolhouse jury as the last bell tong ringing!

Muriel wants a worm to eat

Footsteps on the sands of time

9-20-12 OWIG

PETEY—The Determined Duffer

— THAT'S THE HANDIEST CLUB IN THE BAG THESE DAYS.

C.A. Viall

GASOLINE ALLEY—What Do You Mean, Junk, Emily?

COME INTO THIS ANTIQUE SHOP, AVERY. I WANT YOU TO SEE SOME OF THE LOVELIEST OLD SANDWICH GLASS!

ANTIQUE - HUH! THEY SCOOP UP A BUNCH OF JUNK THAT NOBODY WOULD MARK IT \$5 AND UP PER PIECE AND A LOT OF POOR WOMEN GO CRAZY OVER IT!

NOPE, \$10 IS TOO MUCH FOR THIS LANTERN. GIVE YOU \$7.50

I COULDN'T TAKE A CENT LESS. I MAY HAVE BEEN THE ORIGINAL ONE CARRIED BY PAUL REVEREND YOU KNOW

COIN

CASH

NOW WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ALL THAT JUNK?

DO WITH IT? I'M GOING TO HAVE A DEN - WHAT DO YOU SPOOF? I'M GOING TO DO WITH IT?

King

CONTINUED TOMORROW